



INTERNATIONAL
LAND CONSERVATION
NETWORK

Opportunities for Africa - Europe Collaboration on Nature Conservation

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May 2021*

In the first quarter of 2020, the world has experienced more ups and downs as COVID-19 cases have peaked and dipped. In March and April, some African countries saw a second surge of cases, and subsequent hospitalisation and deaths, leading to lockdowns that further devastate our economies. While necessary, these lockdowns have continued to negatively impact communities and organisations who are stewards of natural landscapes with wildlife, and who rely on tourism revenues to sustain operations.

In the same period, there have been at least three major events promoting the willingness of European nations to collaborate with African countries to invest in unlocking the potential of Africa's green future. On 17th March, the EU hosted a webinar titled '[Addressing the biodiversity crisis: the role of the Africa-EU Partnership](#)'. This webinar brought together a panel of 17 experts from both continents to elucidate the value of collaboration to tackle challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change and health.

Presenters from the European Commission spoke about the investments they have made to initiatives like Northern Rangeland Trust in Kenya, Virunga National Park and [The Great Green Wall](#).

A week later the IUCN hosted another webinar titled '[Promoting Private Investment in the Great Green Wall](#)' on 23rd to 25th March to mobilise resources for this ambitious, African-led initiative that will restore landscapes in the Sahel crossing from over 8,000km at the southern edge of the Sahara desert from Senegal in the west to Djibouti in the East.

A month later, the European Investment Bank sponsored a virtual conference on 23rd April, titled - '[Africa's green future: new investment pathways towards sustainable, inclusive development](#)'. This explored solutions to boost sustainable development and green investments in Africa. The notion of green investments is a favourable preposition to land stewards in communities, private and civic organisations but, this has yet to realise much benefits to these stakeholders. The investments products seem to target large scale projects in built environments e.g. housing, wind or solar energy and other infrastructure projects.

Apart from the Great Green Wall initiative, there have been few mechanisms to invest in biodiversity and ecosystem restoration projects that can benefit land stewards in Africa. For land stewards to access these financial resources - estimated to be up to US \$100 billion - for Africa, we shall have to build awareness and capacity among these stakeholders.

Recent trends indicate there is a growing body of actors in the financial sector willing to accept a degree of risk to invest in land- conservation and restoration. These pioneers' actors are critical in helping to demonstrate the value of investing in biodiversity and ecosystem restoration.

On 1st of June, another webinar related to this topic will be hosted by the [World Resource Institute](#), where civil society, governments, philanthropic and corporate stakeholders will discuss how to unlock \$100 billion for Restoration of Africa's Landscape. This is yet another opportunity to educate ourselves and better understand paths forward for accessing financial resources to meet the ambition of conserving 30% of the Earth by 2030.

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